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MOOT POINTS IN SOCIOLOGY.

VI. THE FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE.—*Continued.*

PASSING now from *statico-dynamic processes* and *transmutations* as factors of social change to *stimuli*, we have first to remark that the quest for these is made difficult by the fact that a brusque revolution in the conditions of life or thought produces not sudden but gradual changes in society. Removal to a new environment, the change from peace to war or *vice versa*, contact with an alien culture, the conjugation of two peoples through conquest, the introduction of a new agent of production — each of these may suddenly shift the plane of existence for a people, and necessitate extensive social readjustments. Yet, owing to mental inertia and the selfish resistance of interested classes, such readjustments are apt to be spread over a considerable period. The shock received within a twelvemonth may echo and reverberate for a whole generation. It is because a given stimulus does not cause a prompt and equally vigorous pulsation in social life, but brings in a long train of adaptations some of them at several removes from the original center of disturbance, that it is so difficult to connect social transformations with their primary causes. Moreover, a succession of dissimilar and unrelated stimuli from different quarters may yield a continuity of social change which will foster the false impression that the transformations of society occur in a fixed order, each state drawing after it the succeeding state, according to some formula of necessary “development.”

With this caution we may now take up, one after another, the chief extra-social factors of social change, and present the characteristic workings of each.

I. *The growth of population.*—This phenomenon presents two cases. In the one case the rate of increase is the same for all parts of the population; in the other, the various classes and sections multiply at diverse rates. The former case will be considered first.

A uniform increase of numbers throughout society, while it does not directly disturb the relations of the parts, changes the relation of population to land, and thus intensifies the exertions needed to procure subsistence. This incites to new ways of exploiting the environment, which in turn bring individuals into new relations, and so cause a revolution of social structure. The advance from the hunting to the pastoral stage does not seem to have followed promptly the domestication of animals, but to have often awaited the pressure of population. Man seems first to have tamed animals for amusement. In Africa we find the Ovambo "very rich in cattle and fond of animal diet, yet their beasts would seem to be kept for show rather than for food." Says Bücher: "Generally speaking, the possession of cattle is for the negro peoples merely 'a representation of wealth and the object of an almost extravagant veneration'—merely a matter of fancy." An Indian village in the interior of Brazil "resembles a great menagerie . . . ; but none of the many animals are raised because of the meat or for other economic purpose." "On the whole, then, no importance can be attached to cattle-raising in the production of the food supplies of primitive peoples." The motor, then, that urges a primitive people on into the pastoral state is either the growing scarcity of game (a "cumulative effect"), or the increase of numbers.

The same driving force caused man to pass from herdmanship to tillage. Of the Navajos we read: "Indian corn . . . was known to them apparently from the earliest times, but while they remained a mere hunting tribe, they detested the labor of planting. But as their numbers increased, the game, more regularly hunted, became scarce, and to maintain themselves in food, necessity forced them to a more general cultivation of corn, and the regular practice of planting became established among them." Says Baden-Powell: "Necessity has forced Rajputs and others to take to agriculture." Wallace writes: "The prospect of starvation is, in fact, the cause of the transition [to agriculture] probably in all cases, and certainly in the case of the Bashkirs." Middendorf says: "Only the poorest Kirghises, driven by want, engage in tillage." An ancient chronicle, alluding to the passage

from pasturage to agriculture in seventh-century Ireland, says: "Because of the abundance of the households, in their period, therefore it is that they [the sons of Æd Slane] introduced boundaries in Ireland." Jenks tells us that the earliest cultivators of the soil were "strangers attached to the tribe upon whom the rough work of the community fell, and who would be the first to suffer from scarcity of food." Elsewhere we are told: "When hemmed in by impassable barriers or invincible enemies, pastoral tribes under the pressure of increasing population slowly become agricultural." To the same force is due the change from extensive and shifting cultivation, where after a crop or two the cultivator makes a fresh clearing, to intensive agriculture, where by an alternation of crops and fallow the same land is used in perpetuity.

Now, through these economic changes the movement of population becomes a primary cause of the changes in social organization to which they give rise. The adoption of pastoral pursuits converts the savage pack into the tribe, institutes property, establishes male kinship, develops patriarchal authority, favors polygyny and wife-purchase, makes woman a chattel, causes captives to be enslaved instead of eaten, and substitutes the *wergeld* for the blood-feud. The adoption of agriculture changes the nature of the social bond. Says Maine: "From the moment a tribal community settles down finally upon a definite space of land, the land begins to be the basis of society in place of kinship." It breaks up the tribe into clans which become village communities. The back-breaking toil induces a resort to systematic slavery and the slave trade. Where settlement has already occurred, the passage from simple collection to tillage causes a passage from the large patriarchal household to the simple family, and from family property in land to individual property with the right of bequest.

After agriculture is adopted, the increase of population does not cease to be a dynamic factor. The land is progressively occupied, until at last the laborer has no longer a direct access to natural resources, but must offer his services for wages. When this point is reached, slavery and serfdom begin to disappear, for coercion is no longer necessary to secure a supply of laborers.

The expansion of population compels a resort to inferior soils, which, by enhancing the value of good land and increasing the landowner's share of the produce, engenders an agricultural aristocracy, which, as it withdraws itself entirely from labor and concentrates its attention on war and politics, becomes master of the community.

Again, the enlargement of demand in consequence of the increase of numbers enables an exchange economy to take the place of domestic husbandry, perhaps causes a foreign trade to spring up. The growth of potential exchange, in consequence of the greater local surpluses to be disposed of and the greater local deficits to be supplied from outside sources, makes it worth while to create avenues of communication, and these, in turn, promote the territorial division of labor. The growth of numbers in a region cannot but strain its natural resources in certain respects and compel the local population to supply their lack of certain commodities from the larger resources of some other locality, sending out in return those products of their own region which are to be had in the greatest abundance. Besides calling into being merchants, markets, and movements of goods, the expansion of population causes local groups of craftsmen to spring up for the supplying of articles formerly demanded in quantities too small to set up currents of trade. In place of the transitory assemblages at fairs, there now appear town populations regularly exchanging their wares with the country.

The growing prominence of exchange brings men into unwonted relations, which presently call forth an expansion of law on the commercial side. The appearance of routes traversing many jurisdictions, and the need of a more perfect security to goods *en route* or in a market, create a demand for royal protection and cement that alliance of the nascent merchant-artisan groups with the king which is so potent in humbling the feudal lords. The monarch, finding his surest support in his struggle with the barons in the burgher population, picks from them his agents and servants, and the choicest of these, ennobled by royal patent, take their places alongside the old territorial aristocracy.

The towns which arose in the Middle Ages to meet the needs of an expanding population became the starting-point of social and political developments quite tangential to the institutions of the time. The manor was a type of constrained association; the town, of free association. "City air makes free." Outside the town the industrial classes were servile, and a stigma attached to labor; inside, labor was honored, and the workman felt joy and pride in his work. Outside, fighting and working were distinct professions; inside, the burgher labored or fought as occasion required. Outside was rigid hereditary caste; inside, men stood in multiple and fluid relationships. The town, in fact, contained the germ of a distinct social growth. How pregnant is the overflow of population into towns appears from the fact that town life develops a mentality of its own, more impressionable and plastic than that of the country. Here outworn traditions and narrow sentiments and obstinate prejudices cancel one another. Races fuse and intermarry. There appear new combinations of hereditary factors. Variation is more common. The shutters of the intellect are taken down. The mind becomes alert and supple. Freed from the hampering net of kin and class ties, the *individual* appears. The town is, therefore, a hotbed, where seed-ideas quickly germinate. Its progressive population soon places itself at the head of the social procession, and sets the pace for the conservative country.

The city, less traditional than the country, values men according to some present fact—their efficiency or their wealth, rather than their family. It is democratic or plutocratic in temper, while the country is the natural support of aristocracy. In the city people consume, as it were, in one another's presence, and hence their expenditure conforms more to the canon of Conspicuous Waste than does that of countrymen. The multiplication of merely conventional wants arouses energy, intensifies competition, whets egoism, and restricts the size of the family.

The increase of social mass has various effects upon regulative institutions. A lateral extension of society, by causing distinctions to arise between local chiefs and the head chief, between local priests and the high priest, favors the formation of hier-

archies. The growth of the aggregate causes a differentiation between sacred and secular functionaries, between military and civil heads, and between judicial, legislative, and executive offices. The heavier burden of business compels the ruler to surround himself with helpers, who in turn require other helpers, until government structure becomes complex. Power is deputed and re-deputed. Control comes into the hands of the leisured or the trained. The exclusion of the poorer classes from the government of the Roman republic in its later period was due to its expansion. "Now that Rome had ceased to be a purely Italian state, and had adopted Hellenic culture, it was no longer possible to take a small farmer from the plow and set him at the head of the community." Eventually, owing to the overflow of population into the great burgess-colonies, and the diffusion of the Romans throughout the peninsula, the absolute centralization in the one focus of Rome was given up, and a municipal system was instituted for Italy which permitted the formation of smaller civic communities within the Roman community. "Under Chlodovech and his immediate successors," we read, "the People, assembled in arms, had a real participation in the resolutions of the king. But with the increasing size of the kingdom, the meeting of the entire people became impossible." In New England, after the local community reaches a certain size, the annual town-meeting is replaced by the government by mayor and council.

There is, furthermore, reason to believe that the formation of large, dense, complex bodies of population is favorable to the growth of a belief in the rights of man as man and to the spread of ideas of human equality, *i. e.*, of the habits of thought that underlie individualism and democracy.

So far, the growth of population has been assumed to proceed at an equal rate throughout society. If, now, it be assumed that the rate of increase is sensibly unequal, a new set of consequences appears. The resulting inequality of pressure—providing the distribution of life-opportunities remains the same—will cause people to pass from class to class and from place to place. City dwellers never keep abreast of country dwellers in reproduction, and hence the city has constantly to be fed with the overflow from

the farms. One consequence is that the city never becomes traditional and static, as it might well do if it grew from its own loins. Another result is the gradual depletion of the eugenic capital of the rural population—*e. g.*, the increasing brachycephaly of France within historic times—owing to the continual drain of its best elements to the cities. As the towns draw from the fields, so the fertile valleys, sterilized by their very prosperity, draw from the barren uplands streams of migrants representing the peoples beaten in ancient conquests.

It may happen that the distinct types in the population—the martial and the industrial, the imaginative and the calculating, the “ideo-motor” and the “critical-intellectual”—come under diverse influences which make their rates of reproduction unequal, and so change their numerical proportions. Every such shifting of the predominant type is marked by important vicissitudes in society.

The unequal increase of population on the opposite sides of a frontier finally sets up a current of migration which replaces one race, language, or civilization by another, thereby entailing changes in society. If the frontier is a political one, the movement is likely to take the form of an armed invasion, and the society must sustain the shock of war. It is now understood that the assaults of the Germans upon the Roman empire were prompted by overpopulation, and the eventual failure to withstand them was due to the fact that infecundity had reduced the empire to a hollow shell.

II. *The accumulation of wealth.*—The progress of wealth, and the expansion of income which attends the control of a growing mass of capital, have a transforming effect on society. Even a general movement of prosperity shared in by all is a dynamic factor. The enlarged production shows itself, not along the entire line of commodities, but chiefly in the higher grades of goods, and in comforts and luxuries. These qualitative changes in production cannot but result in the transfer of labor and capital from certain occupations to others, from extractive to elaborative industries, from the production of goods to the supplying of services, from certain centers and regions to other

centers and regions. Manufactures and foreign trade will be stimulated. Redistributions of population will take place between country and city, between districts producing necessities and districts that produce luxuries. The preponderating importance of capital enhances the sacredness of property in law and in morals, strengthens government as a property-protecting agency, and exalts the virtues of frugality and thrift.

At the same time, the enlarged consumption of goods tends to bring about certain social changes. Crime becomes less serious than vice, so that moral injunctions aim less to restrain men from aggression than to fortify them against the temptations to over-indulgence. Human depravity is doubted, and belief in future retribution dies out. The God of Fear yields to the God of Love. In worship, praise gains at the expense of prayer. To guide men, amid the greater variety of consumables, toward certain harmonious groupings of goods, numerous standards of consumption are erected.

It is hardly to be expected, however, that in the accumulation of capital all portions of society will participate to the same degree. Some will distance others, and those who thus become differentiated from the rest in respect to possessions will eventually segregate into a distinct social class. For capital is not merely economic power; *it is latent social power*. Those of superabundant wealth in time convert portions of it into political power, legal privileges, and invidious social preferences and exemptions, all serving to mark them off from the rest of the community. In other words, an aristocracy may originate, quite apart from conquest, quite apart from royal grace, in the mere fact of superior riches. "The heroes of the Homeric poems," says Maine, "are not only valiant, but wealthy; the warriors of the *Nibelungen Lied* are not only noble, but rich. In the later Greek literature we find pride of birth identified with pride in seven wealthy ancestors." Among the ancient Irish the nobles are in seven grades, distinguished chiefly by wealth. At the bottom of the scale is the Aire-desá and "the Brehon law provides that when the Bo-Aire has acquired twice the wealth of an Aire-desá and has held it for a certain number of generations, he

becomes an Aire-des-a himself." The possession of resources sufficient to enable one to fight on horseback rather than on foot has become the germ of knighthood the world over. Out of it grew the Greek *hippeis*, the Roman Equestrian Order, the Gaulish *equites*, and the mediæval knighthoods.

The appearance of a body of wealthy persons overthrows that primitive political equality of citizens based upon their like capacity to bear arms in defense of the commonwealth. Clients and retainers multiply, and these natural partisans of the rich undermine the burgess class. Not only is the possession of great wealth generally felt to afford a presumption of superiority, but the position of the poorer citizens is weakened by their economic dependence. "It is by taking stock that the free Irish tribesman becomes the Ceile or Kyle, the vassal or man of his chief, owing him not only rent, but service and homage." Meanwhile the proprietors, freed from labor, devote themselves to war and politics, and, well accoutred and expert in weapons, they finally prove themselves more than a match for the *plebs*.

Besides political inequality, the differentiation by possessions entails various other secondary forms of differentiation. Service in the Roman cavalry, originally obligatory upon all who could furnish two horses, became after a time a badge of superiority. Men of standing remained in the cavalry after they had become incapacitated by age. "Young men of rank more and more withdrew from serving in the infantry, and the legionary cavalry became a close aristocratic corps." By the time of Sulla the dying out of the sturdy farmer class and the formation of an urban rabble had converted the Roman army "from a burgess force into a set of mercenaries who showed no fidelity to the state at all, and proved faithful to the officer only when he had the skill personally to gain their attachment." Finally the rich come to feel that wealth ought to buy its possessor clear of every onerous duty. In Cæsar's time "in the soldiery not a trace of the better classes could any longer be discovered. In law the general obligation to bear arms still subsisted; but the levy took place in the most irregular and unfair manner. Numerous persons liable to serve were wholly passed over. . . . The Roman burgess

cavalry, now merely vegetated as a sort of mounted noble guard, whose perfumed cavaliers and exquisite high-bred horses only played a part in the festivals of the capital; the so-called burgess infantry was a troop of mercenaries, swept together from the lowest ranks of the burgess population."

Other differentiations are connected with certain ideas which naturally strike root in a society marked by great pecuniary inequality. One is the notion that *it is disgraceful to take money for work*. The effect of this is to raise a wall of partition between the laborer or artisan and the respectable landlord or manufacturer, between the private and the officer, between the clerk and the magistrate. Akin to this is the idea that *labor is not respectable*. Springing up among the wealthy after they have withdrawn from all public duties and become a leisure class pure and simple, this notion, descending through society, aggravates the discontent and envy of the poor, and causes work to be shunned as much on account of its stigma as on account of its irksomeness. Finally comes the notion that *human worth is measured, not by achievements or personal qualities, but by the scale of consumption*. This exalts pecuniary emulation above all other forms of rivalry, and engenders a host of purely factitious wants which call into being an insensate luxury and, descending through the social strata, prevent the application of goods to real human needs. The joint operation of these principles raises the craving for wealth to an extravagant pitch and depresses the worth of everything else. These effects appear most nakedly in the Rome of the last age of the republic, where the slave economy had completely wiped out the middle class. Says Mommsen: "To be poor was not merely the sorest disgrace and the worst crime, but the only disgrace and the only crime; for money the statesman sold the state and the burgess sold his freedom; the post of the officer and the vote of the juryman were to be had for money; for money the lady of quality surrendered her person as well as the common courtesan; the falsifying of documents and perjuries had become so common that in a popular poet of this age an oath is called 'the plaster for debts.' Men had forgotten what honesty was; a person who refused a bribe was regarded, not as an

upright man, but as a personal foe." There was "nothing to bridge over or soften the fatal contrast between the world of the beggars and the world of the rich." "The wider the chasm by which the two worlds were externally divided, the more completely they coincided in the like annihilation of family life . . . in the like laziness and luxury, the like unsubstantial economy, the like unmanly dependence, the like corruption differing only in its scale, the like criminal demoralization, the like longing to begin the war with property."

The misery of the multitude was such that free men not infrequently sold themselves to the contractors for board and wages as gladiatorial slaves. The obsequiousness of legal relations to economic realities appears from the fact that the juriconsults of the period pronounced lawful and actionable the contract of such a gladiatorial slave "to let himself be chained, scourged, burned, or killed, without opposition, if the laws of the institution should so require."

Changes in taste, the growth and redistribution of population, the shifting of trade routes, mechanical inventions, discovery of natural deposits, or increase in local security, cause wealth to well up at new spots or to come into new hands. If it is true that capital is a primitive kind of power which may be transmuted and differentiated into nearly all forms of the Desirable, then New Wealth will be pregnant with social change. Such, indeed, is the fact. The first full-fledged aristocracy is based on agricultural profits, for among the sources of early revenue land alone possesses that stability which is necessary in order that the merely rich may ripen into a true nobility. If, however, by the side of the blue-blooded territorial aristocracy there forms a considerable body of plebeian rich, the social structure is at once subject to a strain which sooner or later will modify it. It matters not whether the source of these fortunes be piracy, commerce, manufacture, colonial exploitation, tax-farming, or finance; money is power and ultimately contrives to register itself in super-economic forms. The fall of the Greek aristocracies was due to the fortunes made in commerce, navigation, and manufacture. The Eupatrids, absorbed in war and politics and content to leave the

working of their lands to serfs, were confronted by new men who, by clearing and inclosure, sometimes by marriage, had become owners of landed estates. The assault of these upstarts on the political monopoly of the old territorial nobility began the movement which ended at last in democracy. Thucydides declares that the increase in the number of people of means brought about an irresistible demand for a larger participation in government, and that this triumph of property over birth occurred usually in states where property was most diffused, and where maritime commerce, industry, and financial speculation were most developed. Caius Gracchus carried his reforms and broke down the governing aristocracy of Rome by turning over to the rich speculator and merchant class, that had grown up outside the old senatorial nobility, the farming of all the Asiatic provinces and the control of the jury courts.

In the Middle Ages highly prosperous commercial or mining towns bought of their lords the grant of special rights and immunities, and thus virtually ransomed themselves out of the feudal system. In France the first extra-feudal fortunes originated in the farming of taxes. Later, commerce and manufacturing created a wealthy class upon which the monarch constantly leaned when extending his authority at the expense of the feudal *seigneurs*. About the beginning of the seventeenth century the proud Duke of Sully laments that "at this day . . . when everything is rated by the money which it brings, this generous body of nobility is brought into comparison with the managers of the revenue, the officers of justice, and the drudges of business." Finally, can anyone doubt that the strong tendency in the new extra-European societies toward popular government and the democratic spirit finds at least one of its ultimate roots in the diffusion of opportunities to accumulate property brought about by the presence of free land?

III. *Migration to a new environment.*—Here again we have two cases: (*a*) when the new environment is similar to the old; (*b*) when it is essentially different. The first is presented when colonies are established on the same parallel or, better yet, the same isotherm with the mother-country. Here the chief cause why the new society varies from the old is the fact that in the

colony the proportion between people and land is totally different from that in the metropolis. Coming from an old, highly diversified and differentiated society, the colonists, owing to the abundance of their land, find themselves thrown back into the stage of extensive agriculture, or even of herdsmanhip. Moreover, being more favorable to production than to consumption, the colony attracts the active, but contains few persons living on incomes derived exclusively from ownership. For these reasons the new society by no means reproduces all the characteristics of the mother-society. Labor is honored. Achievement rather than enjoyment is its ideal of life. Vigor and efficiency are more esteemed than graces and refinements. The lack of cities, of intercourse, and of leisure is unfavorable to the cultivation of the sciences or the fine arts. The scarcity of labor may lead to the enslavement of weaker races. The community being little differentiated economically or socially, manhood rather than property controls the commonwealth, the temper is individualistic and liberty-loving, and popular institutions take root. Equality before the law is insisted on. Primogeniture is renounced. The state has little power to withstand public opinion. The spell of tradition is broken and the hereditary principle is weak. The spirit of society is either humanitarian or plutocratic, but not aristocratic.

Owing to the growth of numbers, however, such a society will in time approximate the mother-society, unless its early spirit is so crystallized in ideals and institutions as to control its later development. If, on the other hand, migration takes place to an unlike environment—as when northerners occupy a tropical island, mountaineers descend to the seacoast, or a maritime people removes to an inland plateau—the new social development may be quite tangent to the old. Here the chief transforming factor is not Climate or Aspect of Nature working directly on people, but radical change of occupation, working first on habits and ideas, and then on social relationships and institutions. What the direction of variation will be it is, of course, impossible to predict, unless the nature of the new environment is specified.

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[*To be concluded.*]